

No. Enough is enough. The cable companies aren't even providing adequate local service as it is... now they want to create a situation that would OBVIOUSLY make them LESS able to address customer's needs? Especially local needs, that are more specific. For goodness sakes, if I've had trouble with my cable, I can't even reach a local person to explain what the problem is. Just some 18 year old kid in front of a computer, typically somewhere ELSE across the country, reading off rhetoric that may have little or nothing to do with my very local specific issue.

90% of the time, they just blame the problem on the broadcaster and give you the phone number of said broadcaster — and 99% the time it was NOT the broadcaster... it WAS the cable system. So they constantly "pass the buck", take no responsibility for their lack of service, and feel no obligation to change. All they do is give you the run around. Sometimes for DAYS.

On Sept 11, 2001, our cable service was supposedly being "updated". For DAYS before, the reception was so snowy that I couldn't make out faces or read text. The TV was unwatchable. As they were supposedly "working" on the cable service, the pictures were sometimes better than others. So, clearly, there was a way, during an emergency to MAKE the picture more watchable if need be.

Sept 11, 2001 — we could NOT watch the coverage because the cable was not watchable... and they were not responsive to the need that they should make it watchable during such an obvious need for news that day. I had a friend that worked in the towers and I was desperate for info.

I was reduced to finding an old "watchman" to watch the 9/11 coverage. (The reception was bad on that as well since we live in a rural area, but still better than what the cable company was offering.)

I kept calling Comcast, who was very non-responsive. When I asked to talk to a manager, I was informed that the local number I dialed did NOT go to a local customer service it was out-of-state, Kansas, I believe. ... (We live in PA). So there wasn't even anyone connected to the local problems that could address the issue for me. Even though the issue was CLEARLY a very local problem.

All I could think was — what if 9/11 had happened locally and there was

safety info that I needed access to — quickly? The Cable company has no obligation to make sure that at least BASIC access be provided?

That the cable company felt NO obligation to stop their work and at least make things \"watchable\" - (even if not perfect), made me switch to DirecTV and install a large antenna in the attic as a back up.

DirecTV are far from perfect themselves. And I'm sure have no more obligation that Cable does for adequate customer service. However, the reception and quality of picture is consistently excellent from channel to channel to channel. Anytime there has been ANY issue with them, their customer service has been excellent.

If there is a local emergency like 9/11 I at least feel that the odds are DirecTV will be working. Not a guarantee, but better odds than dealing with Comcast.

Since passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and the “deregulation” of cable, consumers have seen their rates jump an average of 59 percent — with some areas experiencing even more dramatic increases.

We are required to buy channels we don't want or need because the cable operators bundle them together. The quality of customer service often reflects the fact that cable television is not a competitive market.

Meanwhile, the cost of cable modem service remains out of reach for many households, holding constant for years and selectively underserving rural and low-income Americans. The American people are watching the digital divide widen even as the need for access to high-speed networks increases.

Cable companies have become less responsive to the needs and requirements of communities. The quality of public accountability in local franchise agreements has declined, as big companies leverage their power to squeeze local governments.

In many communities, the truly independent sources of local news, information and culture come from the public channels produced at the local access centers. Unfortunately, local channels lack the resources to produce

the programming that citizens want and need.

The last thing we need is to reward the anti-competitive actions of cable giants by permitting greater consolidation in ownership, reducing competition, and encouraging more of the same.